

O 171344Z DEC 95  
FM AMEMBASSY RIYADH  
TO USIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3316  
SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2417  
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY AMMAN  
AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS  
GCC COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 RIYADH 005472

LONDON FOR TUELLER; PARIS FOR ALLEGRONE

USIA FOR NEA

E.O.12958: DECL: 12/13/05  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [KISL](#) [PINS](#) [PINR](#) [SA](#)  
SUBJECT: CDLR FEELS VINDICATED BY OPM/SANG BOMBING,  
SEPARATES CROWN PRINCE ABDULLAH FROM THE  
"CORRUPT PACK"

REFS: A) STATE 281707 AND PREVIOUS; B) RIYADH 3592;  
C) RIYADH 2470 AND PREVIOUS

11. CLASSIFIED BY DCM THEODORE H. KATTOUF, REASON 1.5(B).

12. (U) SUMMARY: ANALYSIS OF THE BULLETINS AND COMMUNIQUE ISSUED BY THE THE COMMITTEE FOR THE DEFENSE OF LEGITIMATE RIGHTS (CDLR) DURING THE PAST FOUR WEEKS REVEALS TWO MAIN THEMES OF NOTE. FIRST, THE CDLR CITES THE CAR BOMBING AT THE OPM/SANG HEADQUARTERS IN RIYADH AS VINDICATION OF ITS WARNINGS THAT SUCH ATTACKS WERE INEVITABLE UNDER A CORRUPT REGIME WITH UNACCEPTABLY CLOSE TIES TO THE UNITED STATES. SECOND, THE CDLR HAS ATTEMPTED TO CAPITALIZE ON KING FAHD'S ILL HEALTH TO DRIVE A WEDGE BETWEEN CROWN PRINCE ABDULLAH AND MINISTER OF DEFENSE AND CIVIL AVIATION PRINCE SULTAN WHO, AS SECOND DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER, IS SECOND IN LINE TO THE THRONE AFTER ABDULLAH. THE CDLR COMMUNIQUE IMPLY THAT, EVEN THOUGH CROWN PRINCE ABDULLAH IS AN AL SAUD, HE WOULD BE PREFERABLE AS A RULER TO FAHD OR ANY OF FAHD'S FULL BROTHERS. END SUMMARY.

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BOMBING FOREWARNED  
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12. (U) THE LONDON-BASED SAUDI DISSIDENT GROUP CDLR DISSEMINATED A COMMUNIQUE THE DAY AFTER THE NOVEMBER 13 TERRORIST BOMBING OF OPM/SANG HEADQUARTERS IN RIYADH CITING ITS PREVIOUS WARNINGS THAT SUCH INCIDENTS WERE EXPECTED BECAUSE OF WHAT IT CALLED THE REPRESSION, ARREST, IMPRISONMENT, AND TORTURE OF REFORMERS BY THE AL SAUD GOVERNMENT AND THE USG'S ALLEGED COMPLICITY IN THOSE CRIMES. THOUGH THE CDLR CLAIMED NOT TO BE SURPRISED BY THE BOMBING INCIDENT, IT INSISTED THAT IT HAD NO KNOWLEDGE OF WHAT GROUP OR PERSONS WERE RESPONSIBLE.

13. (U) IN A BULLETIN ISSUED NOVEMBER 22, THE CDLR CITED UPRISINGS FROM THE SAUDI PAST TO ILLUSTRATE WHAT IT CONSIDERED A HISTORICAL PATTERN OF LINKS BETWEEN EPISODES OF CLOSE TIES TO THE WEST AND VIOLENT RESPONSES FROM THE SAUDI PEOPLE. IN THE 1920S, IT NOTED, SUSPICIONS AROSE THAT ABD AL-AZIZ WAS A MERE AGENT OF BRITAIN, AND THE RESULT WAS THE BLOODY IKHWAN UPRISING. IN 1979, JUHAYMAN AL-OTAIBI LED A TAKEOVER OF THE GRAND MOSQUE IN MECCA IN A SHOW OF THE PEOPLE'S ANGER AT THE WESTERN-TILTING AL SAUDS.

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COMMENT  
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14. (U) CLEARLY, THE CDLR WISHES TO DRAW A PARALLEL TO

THE CLOSE SAUDI-U.S. RELATIONSHIP UNDER FAHD AND WHAT IT CONSIDERS A JUSTIFIABLY ANGRY RESPONSE TO THAT RELATIONSHIP FROM THE SAUDI PEOPLE, ESPECIALLY SINCE THE GULF WAR: THE SIGNING OF JOINT PETITIONS, THE RISE AND IMPRISONMENT OF ISLAMIST ULEMA, AND NOW THE OPM/SANG BOMBING. ACCORDING TO THE CDLR, PEOPLE--OUTSIDERS AS WELL AS SAUDIS--MAKE THE MISTAKE OF ASSUMING THAT THE NATIVES OF THE ARABIAN PENINSULA HAVE A PEACEFUL NATURE WHEN, IN FACT, WHAT CONTROLS THE INNATE ANGER OF THE REGION'S PEOPLE IS THE UMBRELLA OF RELIGION. THE IMPLICATION HERE IS A THEME FAMILIAR FROM PREVIOUS CDLR MISSES: IN THE ABSENCE OF TRUE ISLAMIC RULE, AND TRULY ISLAMIC RULERS, THE PEOPLE WILL SHOW THEIR AGGRESSIVE SIDE. END COMMENT.

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WEDGE BETWEEN ABDULLAH AND SULTAN  
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15. (U) IN SUBSEQUENT FAXES ISSUED DECEMBER 11 AND 13, THE CDLR CHARGED THAT KING FAHD REMAINED PARALYZED FOLLOWING HIS HOSPITALIZATION FOR A STROKE AND THAT HIS DECEMBER 5 TELEvised HOSPITAL MAJLIS WAS A GIANT BLUFF USING FILE FOOTAGE. ACCORDING TO CLDR'S VERSION OF EVENTS, THE HOAX WAS ENGINEERED BY THE OTHER SUDAYRI BROTHERS--PRINCES SULTAN, SALMAN, AND NAYIF--TO STRENGTHEN THEIR POSITION AND HEAD OFF THE ASCENSION TO THE THRONE OF HALF-BROTHER ABDULLAH.

16. (U) THE CDLR CLAIMED FURTHER THAT SULTAN USED ABDULLAH'S ABSENCE DURING THE RECENT GCC SUMMIT IN MUSCAT TO APPEAL IN VAIN TO THE ULAMA TO DECLARE HIM THE SUCCESSOR TO FAHD AND TO STRIP ABDULLAH OF HIS COMMAND OF THE NATIONAL GUARD, PLACING IN HIS STEAD HIS FULL BROTHER PRINCE ABDULRAHMAN BIN ABD AL-AZIZ, SULTAN'S DEPUTY AT MODA. THE DECEMBER 11 CDLR COMMUNIQUE SEPARATES ABDULLAH FROM THE REST OF THE AL SAUD PACK (IDENTIFYING HIM AS "THE OTHER PARTY") AND EXHORTS HIM TO ASSUME HIS HISTORIC RESPONSIBILITY TO REASSERT SAUDI ARABIA'S LEADERSHIP IN ESTABLISHING ISLAMIC JUSTICE, DEFENDING THE PROSELYTIZATION OF ISLAM, RESPECTING REFORMERS, AND RIDDING THE NATION OF FOREIGN HEGEMONISTS. THE COMMUNIQUE CONCLUDES WITH AN APPEAL FOR THE UNCONDITIONAL RELEASE OF ALL DETAINEES.

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COMMENT  
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17. (C) THE CDLR'S HARSH DESCRIPTION OF PRINCES SULTAN, SALMAN, AND NAYIF AS CRIMINALS WITH BLOOD ON THEIR HANDS IS NOT SURPRISING OR EVEN NEW. SALMAN, AS GOVERNOR OF RIYADH, DEALT FACE-TO-FACE WITH CDLR SPOKESMAN MUHAMMAD AL-MASARI AND HIS FOLLOWERS WHEN THEY WERE FIRST DETAINED. MINISTER OF INTERIOR PRINCE NAYIF OVERSAW MASARI'S INCARCERATION IN AL-HAYR PRISON. SULTAN--FULL BROTHER TO KING FAHD, SALMAN, AND NAYIF--FITS EASILY INTO THE GROUP. AS MINISTER OF DEFENSE AND CIVIL AVIATION, HE IS CLOSELY TIED TO THE WELCOMING OF WESTERN COALITION FORCES TO THE PENINSULA DURING OPERATIONS DESERT SHIELD AND DESERT STORM--AN IMPORTANT POINT OF CONTENTION FOR CDLR. AND AS SECOND IN LINE TO THE THRONE, SULTAN IS THE SUDAYRI MOST LIKELY TO BECOME KING.

18. (C) WHAT IS UNUSUAL IN THE FAXES IS THE CDLR'S SEPARATE APPEAL TO CROWN PRINCE ABDULLAH, WHOM THEY DISTINGUISH FROM OTHER RULING AL SAUDS WHO "DISTORT THE IMAGE OF ISLAM." BY IMPLYING THAT ABDULLAH COULD SERVE AS A MEANINGFUL ALTERNATIVE TO SUDAYRI RULE, CDLR PLAYS TO THE PERCEPTION COMMON AMONG SAUDIS THAT ABDULLAH IS A MORE ETHICAL MAN THAN FAHD, THAT HE CARES MORE FOR HIS COUNTRY, THAT HE "PANDERS" LESS TO THE WEST AND AMERICA IN PARTICULAR, AND THAT HIS REIGN AS KING WOULD BE FAR LESS CORRUPT THAN FAHD'S.

19. (C) IT IS DOUBTFUL THE CDLR ACTUALLY BELIEVES THIS ASSESSMENT, SINCE ABDULLAH WOULD NOT FURTHER THE ORGANIZATION'S TRUE, LONG-TERM GOALS--THE CREATION OF AN

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC AND THE OVERTHROW OF THE AL SAUD. BUT  
BY PRESENTING ITSELF AS SYMPATHETIC TO CHANGE UNDER  
ABDULLAH, THE CDLR CAN ALIGN ITSELF WITH A RELATIVELY  
POPULAR BELIEF AMONG SAUDIS IN GENERAL. THE CDLR MAY  
ALSO BE ATTEMPTING TO POSITION ITSELF FOR AN APPEAL FOR  
THE RELEASE OF THE REMAINING ISLAMIST DETAINEES ONCE  
ABDULLAH BECOMES KING. AT THE SAME TIME, CDLR SPOKESMAN  
MUHAMMAD MASARI MAY HAVE IT IN MIND TO REASSURE THE  
BRITISH GOVERNMENT, AT A POINT WHEN HE IS UNDER  
SUSPICION OF HAVING LINKS TO THE OPM/SANG BOMBING (REF  
A), THAT HIS ORGANIZATION IS NOT REALLY COMMITTED TO THE  
VIOLENT OVERTHROW OF THE AL SAUDS BUT CAN WORK FOR  
CHANGE WITHIN THE SYSTEM. END COMMENT.

MABUS